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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the production of conventional conversational openings by five advanced learners of Kiswahili with experience in the Kiswahili speaking environment. Native speakers of Kiswahili usually engage in lengthy openings including several phatic inquiries (PIs) and phatic responses (PRs). The number and manner in which the PIs and PRs are produced depend on the age difference of participants. Participants of the same age compete in PI production, resulting in PI/PR and PI/PI overlaps and successive PIs produced by one participant. PIs and PRs are produced at a rapid rate If there is an age difference, the younger participant initiates the opening by producing a respectful greeting form, and the older person produces most of the PIs. The advanced non-native speakers were pragmatically aware of Kiswahili openings and were native-like in the way they engaged in lengthy greetings. However, the learners' openings were produced at a slow pace, resulting in non-overlapping reciprocity with each participant awaiting his turn. Results show variability in learners' performance both across individual learners and across situations. (MSE)

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Conversational Openings in Kiswahili: The Pragmatic Performance of Native and Non-native Speakers

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Conversational Openings in Kiswahili: The Pragmatic Performance of Native and Non-native Speakers

Alwiya S. Omar

Native speakers of Kiswahili usually engage in lengthy openings which include several Phatic Inquiries (PIs) and Phatic Responses (PRs). The number and manner in which the PIs and PRs are produced depend on the age difference between participants. Participants of the same age compete in the PI production. As a result there are PI/PR and PI/PI overlaps, and successive PIs produced by one participant. The PIs and PRs are produced at a relatively rapid tempo. If there is an age difference, the younger participant initiates the opening by producing a respectful greeting form. Then the older person produces most of the PIs.

Non-native speakers, in this case, five advanced learners who have been to the target language environment, are pragmatically aware of Kiswahili conversational openings and are native-like in the way they engage in lengthy greetings. Upon examination, the learners' openings are produced at a slow pace resulting in a non-overlapping reciprocity with each participant waiting for his or her turn. The results show that there is variability in the learners' performance not only across individual learners but also across situations.

INTRODUCTION

This study examines how native speakers (NS) and advanced non-native speakers (NNS) of Kiswahili open conversations. It is based on an earlier work in which I found variability in the performance of greetings by beginning and intermediate students. In particular, the learners performed minimal greetings (Omar, 1991). I suggested that this area of inquiry be expanded to include learners of Kiswahili who have had exposure to the target language environment, since it is possible that the foreign language setting may have some influence on the pragmatic performance of the learners. This paper specifically examines the effect of the setting on the performance of advanced learners of Kiswahili who had been in a Kiswahili speaking environment. The paper also elaborates native speaker openings presented in the earlier work.

The manner of opening conversations is such an important discourse function in a Kiswahili speaking community that Kiswahili children, from a very early age, are taught the art of greeting, and they are reprimanded if they do not perform this function appropriately. However, minimal research has been done on how speakers of Kiswahili, native and non-native, perform this important aspect of discourse. Most studies on pragmatics and language learning have focused on the performance of English language learners. It is important to examine the pragmatic knowledge of learners of other languages as well.

PART ONE: THE PERFORMANCE OF NATIVE SPEAKERS

Method

Native speaker data was collected for a period of one month in Zanzibar by means of participant observation. People greeting at home, in the streets, and in offices, were observed and their conversations were tape recorded. When it was not possible to get recorded data, dialogues were reconstructed shortly after the conversations. Native speakers, male and female, and of different ages, participated in this study. The results show that 'age' is the major sociolinguistic parameter in opening conversations in Kiswahili.

Results and Discussion

Components of a conversational opening. A conversational opening in Kiswahili consists of several parts. One major part of a conversational opening is made up of Phatic Inquiries (PIs) and Phatic Responses (PRs). I am using Kasper's (1989) definitions of the terms PI and PR based on the work of Goffman (1972), Schegloff (1972), among others. Kasper defines Phatic Inquiry as a ritualized inquiry after the interlocutor's wellbeing, realized by a routine formula; it has an eliciting discourse function. A Phatic Reply, he defines, as a ritualized response to Phatic Inquiry realized by a routine formula; it has a responding discourse function. For example, routine formulae for PIs in Kiswahili are *Hujambo?* 'How are you?', *Habari?* 'News?' etc., and the respective routine formulae for PRs are *Sijambo* 'I'm fine', *Nzuri* 'Good' etc. The rapidity in which PIs and PRs are produced results in either PI/PR overlap, PI/PI overlap, or two PIs in a row.

Another part of a Kiswahili conversational opening is a respectful greeting sequence which usually precedes the PI/PR sequence when there is an age difference between participants in a conversation. The younger person is expected to use the greeting *Shikamoo*[1] and the older person responds with a routine formula, *Marahaba*, meaning 'alright'.

A verbal recognition, like calling out somebody's name or an expression of joy at meeting another person, is another component of a conversational opening in Kiswahili. It may precede the PI/PR sequence or the respectful greeting sequence.

All the above sequences are preceded by a unique opening *Hodi* when one visits the house of another person. *Hodi* is the equivalent of English 'knock, knock' and its response is *Karibu* -- 'welcome'.

Age as a major sociolinguistic parameter. Conversational openings are conducted variously depending on the age of the interlocutors. When there is an age difference, it is considered polite for the younger participant to initiate the opening by using a respectful greeting form. Then the older person will respond and take an active role in the production of PIs. The younger person has a passive role and produces PRs with limited or no PIs. With participants of the same age, no respectful form is required and both participants compete for the active role of producing

PIs. As in Wolof greetings (Irvine, 1974), the younger person in a Kiswahili conversational opening adopts a self lowering role by producing a respectful greeting form as X does in turn 1 of (1).[2] Unlike the Wolof greetings, however, it is the older person who produces the most PIs.[3] X produces only one PI, in turn 13 while Y, the older one produces 5 PIs.

(1) Different age; PI domination (30 year old man, X, passes a 55 year old female acquaintance, Y)

1. X:	Shikamoo	Shikamoo
2. Y:	Marahaba. Habari?	OK. News? (PI)
3. X:	Nzu|ri.	Good. (PR)
4. Y:	|Hujambo?	Are you fine?
5. X:	Sijambo.	I am fine.
6. Y:	Habari za kwenu?	News of your home?
7. X:	Nzuri.	Good.
8. Y:	Watu wote hawajambo?	Is every body fine?
9. X:	Hawajambo.	They are fine.
10. Y:	Watoto?	The children?
11. X:	Hawajambo.	They are fine.
12. Y:	Haya bwana.	OK, bwana.
13. X:	Je, salama?	Peaceful?

(2) PI competition; PI/PR partial overlap (R and S are two women friends of same age, around 40 who haven't seen each other for a long time)

1. R:	Iiii (indicating that she has seen S)	
2. S:	Habari za miaka?	News of many years?
3. R:	Nzu|ri	Good
4. S:	|Salama, salama?[5]	Peaceful? (emphasized)
5. R:	Sala|ma.	Peaceful.
6. S:	|Hamjambo nyote?	Are you all fine?
7. R:	Hatujambo.	We are fine.
8. S:	Haya...	OK.....
9. R:	Habari zaidi?	More news?
10. S:	A Sala|ma tu.	Just peaceful.
11. R:	|Watoto hawajambo?	Are the children fine?
12. S:	Hawajambo. Nyie tu?	They are fine. And you?

When the participants are of the same age, each will strive for an active role, and a respectful greeting form is not required. It is possible that one participant may dominate the PIs at the beginning by producing them at a rapid tempo even before the PRs of the other participant are complete, causing partial overlaps between PIs

and PRs as in turns 3 to 6 in Example (2). When the other participant gets the floor for the PIs, s/he will try to do the same. In (2), S asks the PIs from turns 2, 4, 6, and again in turn 12 while R gets the chance to ask 2 PIs only in turns 9 and 11.[4]

Sometimes, PI overlaps occur because each participant wants to have the active role. An example of a PI overlap is seen in turns 3 and 4 of (3) in which Q initiated the PIs and maintained the active role until R managed to take over and produced her second PI in turn 13. In the attempt to maintain an active role, a participant may produce two PIs in a row. Q in (3), turn 10, produces two PIs in a row. The first PI is usually ignored and a response is given to the second PI as R did in turn 11.

(3) PI/PI total overlap, PIs in a row, and recycled PIs and PRs (R and Q, female acquaintances of the same age, pass each other in the street)

1.	R: Mosi!	(A woman's name)
2.	Q: ooo, habari zako?	Yeah, your news?
3.	R: Nzuri. /Hujambo?/	Good. How are you?
4.	Q: /Mzima?/	Are you OK?
5.	R: Mzima.	OK.
6.	Q: Lini umekuja?	When did you come?
7.	R: Wiki sasa.	It's a week now.
8.	Q: Alaa? Nini khabari zaidi?[6]	Yes? What news?
9.	R: Salama.	Peaceful.
10.	Q: Hamjambo jambo? Jamaa wote hawajambo?	Are you fine? Is the family fine?
11.	R: Hawaja|mbo.	They are fine.
12.	Q: |Mama hajambo?	Is mother fine?
13.	R: Hajambo. Na wewe nyumbani hamjambo?	She's fine. And you at home are you fine?

PIs and PRs are recursive in nature and they reoccur after the main topic of a dialogue or following a phatic remark. Turns 6 and 7 of the dialogue in (3) provide a break in the PI/PR sequences which are resumed in turn 8. Obviously, these speakers do not consider five turns of a conversational opening as complete. Therefore, there is a need to continue with more turns. Recycling of PI/PR sequences during the course of a conversation occurred in several other interactions observed, including telephone conversations. After the recycling of PIs and PRs, a new topic may be introduced, or the old one continued.

In official settings, when participants did not know each other well, opening sessions were short. PIs and PRs, in these situations served the function of attention getters. The dialogue in (4) was conducted at a passport office in Zanzibar.

As the data have shown, Kiswahili conversational openings are initiated differently depending on the age of participants. The initial opening sequence may be a PI followed by a PR when participants are of the same age. This PI/PR sequence must be preceded by a respectful greeting sequence when there is an age difference

between the interlocutors. The younger participant initiates the opening by using a respectful greeting form. All the above sequences may be preceded by verbal recognition like calling out an interlocutor's name or an expression of joy. And finally, when a person visits the house of another, regardless of age, the visitor uses a unique opening, *Hodi* before anything else, as in (5).

(4) PIs as attention getters (Client T wants to get clerk V's attention. V is talking to another client (reconstructed))

1. T:	Habari gani bwana?	How are you sir?
2. V:	Nzuri.	Good.
3. T:	Salama?	Peaceful?
4. V:	Salama.	Peaceful.
5. T:	Nataka maombi ya pasi.	I want application forms.
6. T:	Haya. Subiri kidogo.	Ok. Wait a moment.

(5) Unique opening *hodi* (A is visiting his friend B; dialogue obtained from Television Zanzibar video play)

1. A:	Hodi, hodi.	Knock, knock.
2. B:	Karibu bwana	Welcome pal.
	Oho! Nini hali?	Oho! What condition?

PART TWO: THE PERFORMANCE OF NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS

The second part of the paper examines how non-native speakers of Kiswahili, in this case advanced learners who have had some exposure of the target language environment, open conversations. The results seem to show that learners produce elaborate PIs and PRs but tend not to recycle them. Moreover, they produce PIs and PRs at a slower pace than native speakers. As a result their openings rarely include overlaps, and they never produce successive PIs.

Method

Five American learners of Kiswahili participated in this study. Three learners, LN1, LN2, and LN4 have been to the host environment for a period of at least eight weeks, LN3 for six months, and LN5 for about a week. There are three factors which distinguish these five learners from those who participated in the previous study (Omar, 1991): level of proficiency, exposure to the target language environment, and ability to create learning environments outside of the classroom with their instructors and other available Kiswahili speakers. Unlike the lower proficiency learners from the previous study, these learners appear native-like in the way they initiate and elaborate on greetings. To confirm these informal findings, both elicited and natural data were collected. For elicited data, classroom verbal role plays were recorded. Telephone conversations between the students and their Kiswahili instruc-

tors, and between the students themselves, as well as office hour conversations between students and their instructors were part of the natural data.

This section compares in detail the performance of two learners, LN3 who was in the target environment for six months, and LN5 who was there for only a week. Their performance during the office hour conversation, and in the telephone conversation, is compared. Neither LN3 nor LN5 perform native like openings in the office hour conversation with instructor FT. On the phone, LN3 was more native-like than LN5 who used English greeting style in Kiswahili.

Results and Discussion

Role plays. In the verbal role plays, learners were asked to present a play in class in which they adopted different roles in different situations. Four learners participated in this elicitation task. They were given about ten minutes to prepare. The performance was recorded. Example (6) is an opening of one scene in a play about 'marriage'. The learners were comfortable in the roles and the subject they chose. Therefore, they were able to engage in lengthy openings as the dialogue in (6) illustrates.

(6) Role Play (Two male friends; same age)

1. LN1:	Hodi.	Knock.
2. LN5:	Karibu.	Welcome in.
3. LN1:	Hujambo.	How are you?
4. LN5:	Sijambo. Habari gani?	I'm fine. What news?
5. LN1:	Nzuri.	Good.
6. LN5:	Karibu.	Welcome.
7. LN1:	Asante. Habari yako?	Thanks. Your news?
8. LN5:	Salama. Na wewe?	Peaceful. And you?
9. LN1:	Salama tu. Habari ya huku?	Just peaceful. News of here?
10. LN5:	Nzuri sana. Wewe nyumbani?	Very good. You at home?
11. LN1:	Salama. Wote nyumbani hawajambo?	Peaceful. All at home are fine?
12. LN5:	Hawajambo.	They are fine.

The learners' openings in the verbal role plays have the following structure: initiation of the opening session by using features like 'hodi' and 'karibu', the use of PIs and PRs about the participants, the use of PIs and PRs about other people according to shared knowledge, and going to the main topic of the visit. Kiswahili features absent in the learners' openings are the recycling of the PIs and PRs, and the rapid tempo.

The learners' performance was tested further by the use of natural data which was obtained by recording office hour conversations (as in Bardovi-Harlig and Hartford, 1991; Hartford & Bardovi-Harlig, in press), and recording telephone conversations (as in Godard, 1977).

Office Hour Conversations. Learners were asked to come to the instructor's office to talk about a project they were expected to do for the class. They were told in advance that the sessions would be taped, and that they should regard the instructor's office as another place where they could use the language informally. Like a younger NS participant, LN2 in (7) adopted a passive role after having used the respectful greeting form at the beginning of the opening session.

(7) Office hour (LN2, a female student younger than instructor FT,[7] was in the target environment for eight weeks)

1.	FT:	Karibu. Hujambo?	Come in. How are you?
2.	LN2:	Sijambo. Shikamoo.	I'm fine. Shikamoo.
3.	FT:	Marahaba.	Alright
4.	LN2:	Samahani, nimechelewa.	Sorry, I'm late.
5.	FT:	Eh. Saa ngapi?	OK. What time is it?
6.	LN2:	Saa nne na nusu.	Ten thirty.
7.	FT:	Si kitu. Habari za nyumbani?	It's nothing. News of home?
8.	LN2:	(laughs) Salama. Nimekimbia.	Peaceful. I ran.
9.	FT:	Pole. Habari za masomo?	I'm sorry. News of studies?
10.	LN2:	Nzuri. Habari za nyumbani?	Good. News of home?
11.	FT:	Salama.	Peaceful.

(8) Office hour (LN5, a male student younger than instructor FT, was in the target environment for one week)

1.	FT:	Karibu. Habari za masomo?	Welcome. News of studies?
2.	LN5:	Nzuri sana.	Very good.
3.	FT:	Habari za kazi?	News of work?
4.	LN5:	Kazi nyingi sana.	A lot of work.
5.	FT:	Kazi nyingi. Unapenda kusoma?	A lot of work. Do you like to study?
6.	LN5:	Kidogo sana.	Very little.
7.	FT:	Unasomesha pia?	Do you teach as well?
8.	LN5:	Hapana.	No.
9.	FT:	Umefikiria kitabu ambacho unapenda kusoma?	Have you thought of a book that you would like to read?

(9) **Office hour (LN3, a male student of same age as female instructor FT, was in the target language environment for six months)**

1.	FT:	Habari? Kaa kitako.	News? Sit down.
2.	LN3:	{no reply; gives FT something}	
3.	FT:	Oh, umeleta. Vizuri. Asante.	You brought them. Good. Thanks.
4.	LN3:	Eh.	Yes.
5.	FT:	Ameleta yule rafiki yako? Vizuri. Habari za nyumbani?	Your friend sent them. Good. News of home?
6.	LN3:	Salama.	Peaceful.
7.	FT:	Hawajambo wote?	Is everybody fine?
8.	LN3:	Hawajambo.	They are fine.
9.	FT:	L amekwenda Fort Wayne?	L has gone to Fort Wayne?
10.	LN3:	Amekwenda.	She has.
11.	FT:	Habari za kazi?	News of work?
12.	LN3:	mm Nzuri.	Good.
13.	FT:	Unasomesha?	Do you teach?

I regard the opening in (7) as more successful than those in (8) and (9). LN2 in Example (7) is native-like. She used the respectful form *shikamoo* and like any younger NS participant, she adopted a passive PI role producing only one PI in turn 10. LN5 and LN3, on the other hand, are not native-like. Their passive role in the PI production does not match their performance at the beginnng of the opening; they did not begin the opening with a respectful form. Even though LN3 was in the host environment for six months, and LN5 was there for only a week, they demonstrate little difference in performance in opening conversations in the office setting.

LN3 and LN5 performed elaborate openings in role plays. So we cannot attribute their failure to produce PIs in the office as a lack of knowledge of the required forms. The reason could be the context of conversation. Apparently, the learners did not regard the instructor's office as a place where they could engage in lengthy greetings even though they were prompted by the instructor. Since the instructor did not want to end the opening abruptly, in (8) and (9), by going straight to the main topic, she continued with the PIs and engaged the learners in small talk. The advanced learners have developed the capacity to prolong an opening. It is interesting to note that while the less advanced learners in the previous study adopted the strategy of going straight to the main topic, the learners in the present study did not adopt such a strategy.

Telephone Conversations. Recording telephone conversations yielded more spontaneous data than informal office conversation. Those learners who did not engage in elaborate PIs in the office, did, however, elaborate to some extent on the telephone. In Example (10), for example, LN3 goes to the main reason for his call only after FT has exhausted the greetings and laughs in turn 14.

LN3 was the one who called FT but he did not go straight to the main topic of his call indicating that he knows that typical Kiswahili openings are not abrupt. He is waiting for a cue from FT that she is not going to produce any more PIs so he can go to the reason for the call.

(10) Telephone conversation-waiting for instructor's cue (LN3 calls FT)

1.	FT:	Hello.	Hello.
2.	LN3:	FT! (calls out name)	
3.	FT:	Eh. Habari?	Yes. news?
4.	LN3:	Eh. Nzuri. Habari?	Good. News?
5.	FT:	Hujambo?	How are you?
6.	LN3:	Sijambo.	I'm fine.
7.	FT:	Habari za toka	News since day
		juzi?	before yesterday?
8.	LN3:	Safi kabisa.	Very neat.
9.	FT:	Vipi? /Hawajambo/	What's up? How is
10.	LN3:	/Hamjambo?/	Are you fine?
11.	FT:	wote nyumbani?	everybody at home?
12.	LN3:	Eh.	Yeah.
13.	FT:	K na J hawajambo?	Are K and J fine?
14.	LN3:	Eh.	Yes.
15.	FT:	{laughs}	
16.	LN3:	Tutafanya nini kesho?	What are we going to do in class tomorrow?

The beginning of the conversation between LN5 and FT, in (11) is different from that in (10). LN5 identifies himself in turn 2, and in turn 6, wants to ensure FT is free to talk at this time. While such behavior is expected in the English code, it is unusual in Kiswahili. Native speakers calling each other by telephone would not immediately identify themselves nor would they ask if the person they are calling is available to talk. LN5 is the learner who has been in the target language environment for the shortest time and is unlikely to have had much telephone experience.

In general, telephone conversational openings between the learners are extensive. There is some recycling of PIs and PRs as in turns 8 and 9 in Example (12) below, but the tempo is slow.

Summary of Results

Non-native speakers of Kiswahili -- in this case advanced learners who have had some exposure to the target language environment, are native-like in terms of the length of their openings in some situations. Other aspects of their openings, however, are not native-like. They minimally recycle PIs and PRs, and their openings do not contain overlaps due to their observation of the norms of turn-taking in conversations. The performance of these learners contrasts substantively with lower proficiency learners who did not exhibit any of these behaviors (Omar, 1991).

(11) Telephone conversation-using English greeting style (LN5 calls FT; different age)

1.	FT:	Hello.	Hello.
2.	LN5:	Hujambo mwalimu? Huyu ni MK.	How are you, teacher? This is MK.
3.	FT:	Sijambo. Habari?	I'm fine. News?
4.	LN:	Salama. Habari yako?	Peaceful. Your news?
5.	FT:	Nzuri. Habari ya tangu jana?	Good. News since yesterday?
6.	LN5:	Salama. Unakula sasa?	Peaceful. Are you eating now?
7.	FT:	A a. Nimemaliza.	No. I'm done.
8.	LN5:	Umemaliza. Sawa. Sasa unataka kujua kitabu gani ninataka kusoma?	You are done. Fine. Now do you want to know what book I want to read?

(12) Telephone conversation-long opening; recycling; slow tempo (LN1 calls LN4; same age)

1.	LN1:	Hujambo?	How are you?
2.	LN4:	Sijambo. Habari?	I'm fine. How are you?
3.	LN1:	Nzuri. Habari zako?	Good. Your news?
4.	LN4:	Salama.	Peaceful.
5.	LN1:	Na sasa unafanya nini?	And now what are you doing?
6.	LN4:	Nakula chakula na nasoma gazeti.	I'm eating and reading a newspaper.
7.	LN1:	Aha, vizuri. Sasa ninazungumza nawe.	Good. Now I'm talking to you.
8.	LN4:	Habari za mtoto?	News of the child?
9.	LN1:	Salama.	Peaceful.
10.	LN4:	Amelala?	Is he sleeping?

The data indicates a sequencing in the learning process of Kiswahili conversational openings. The following generalization can be made: the ability to engage in a lengthy conversational opening emerges first. As Table 1 illustrates, beginning and intermediate students sometimes engage in lengthy greetings while advanced learners do so most of the time; recycling of PIs and PRs emerges next -- Beginning and Intermediate learners seldom recycle PIs and PRs while Advanced learners sometimes do; rapid tempo -- resulting in PI/PI overlap, PI/PR overlap, and successive PIs -- is acquired late.

Table 1. Comparing the performance of native and non-native speakers in the production of PIs and PRs.

	NS	ANNS	B/INNS
Length	+	+	o
Recycling	+	o	-
PI overlap	+	o	-
PI/PR overlap	+	-	-
PIs in a row	+	-	-

NS = Native speakers; ANNS = Advanced nonnative speakers;
B/INNS = Beginning and Intermediate non-native speakers
+ occurs most of the time; o sometimes occurs; - never or seldom occurs

CONCLUSION

This paper examines the performance of native speakers and advanced learners of Kiswahili in opening conversations. Age difference plays an important part in the way native speakers perform conversational openings. A younger person is expected to initiate an opening by using a respectful greeting form. Then the older person responds and monopolizes the production of PIs while the younger person has the passive role of responding. Beginning and intermediate learners observed in Omar (1991), and some advanced learners in the present study, also took the passive role of producing PRs which matches the performance of the younger native speaker. These learners, however, did not produce the respectful greeting form at the beginning of the opening. This mismatch is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Comparing openings by younger NS and A/ B/I NNS

	Younger NS	A/B/I NNS
Respectful form	+	-
Passive PI role	+	+

NS = Native speaker; A/B/I NNS = Advanced, Beginning and Intermediate Nonnative speaker; PI = Phatic Inquiry.

Native speakers of the same age produce PIs and PRs at a rapid tempo resulting in overlaps and successive production of PIs. Non-native speakers of the same age -- in this case advanced learners (data from telephone and role plays) -- lacked

this tempo in their openings. The performance of speakers of the same age, native and non-native, is exemplified in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparing the performance of native and non-native speakers of the same age.

	Same age NS	Same age NNS
Respectful form	-	-
PI competition	+	-

NS = Native Speaker; NNS = Non-native Speaker; PI = Phatic Inquiry.

The advanced learners in this study have visited the target language environment, are proficient in Kiswahili, and are able to create environments outside the classroom to speak the language with each other and with other Kiswahili speakers. When casually observed, the learners appeared native-like in the way they initiated openings and also in the way they produced elaborate PIs and PRs, and recycled them to some extent. The results show that the learners are pragmatically aware of Kiswahili conversational openings but they sometimes lack the host experience in performing certain kinds of openings.

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NOTES

[1]Historically, *Shikamoo* used to stand for *Nakushika miguu* -- "I'm holding your legs". It was used by people of lower status greeting those of higher status while holding their legs. This particular meaning is no longer in use.

[2]The notations used in this and other dialogues: / / Total overlaps: | | Partial overlaps. The numbers on the left of the dialogues indicate conversational turns. Single letters such as X, Y, R, are native speakers; LN followed by a number indicate advanced learners of Kiswahili; FT is the Kiswahili instructor.

[3]Irvine (1974) discusses two status strategies adopted by Wolof speakers when they greet each other: self lowering and self elevating. The initiator of a greeting is usually of a lower rank and takes the active role of asking all the questions while a person of a higher rank remains passive responding to only the initiator's questions. A person of a higher rank, however, may choose to adopt the self-lowering status as a strategy for the avoidance of financial or other kind of obligations linked with the higher status.

[4]If there is any ulterior motive for wanting to have the active role of asking PIs, it is not a self lowering one as in the Wolof greeting Irvine (1974). Further analysis of native speaker openings needs to be done to determine the motive for PI competition between participants of the same age in Kiswahili.

[5]Some Zanzibari speakers reduplicate {Is. S has reduplicated the PI in this turn -- *Salima, salama.* More reduplication is found in Example (3) turn 10 -- *Hamjambo jambo.* In Example (5) turn 1, the unique opening is also reduplicated --*Hodi, hodi.*

[6]*khabari* and its variant *habari* -- 'news' is borrowed from Arabic */xabar/.* Many Zanzibari speakers prefer to pronounce the velar fricative */x/.*

[7]The author participated in this study as the instructor FT in the office hour, and in the telephone conversations.

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